



Why consider university study in the US?

Studying abroad provides the opportunity for you to not only further your education, but also find out more about the world you live in, experience new cultures and ideas, and find out a little more about yourself in the process. The answers to these frequently asked questions can help you decide if studying in the US is the right option for you...

Why should I study in the US?

“Quality”, “choice” and “flexibility” are the most commonly stated reasons for choosing to study in the US. US colleges are known worldwide for the quality of their facilities, resources, and faculty and there are accreditation systems in place to ensure that institutions continue to maintain these standards. The US education system features many types of institutions, academic and social environments, entry requirements, degree programs, and subjects in which you can specialize. US universities and colleges offer flexibility in choice of courses, but more importantly there is also the option for students to move from one institution to another. Completing the first two years of a degree at one institution, usually a community college, and then moving to another, is very common.

How do I choose the university that is best for me?

Important considerations in choosing a university are tuition costs, fields of study available, size and educational philosophy of the university, opportunities for financial aid and personal considerations (for example, would you prefer a large university with the nightlife of New York or a small ‘liberal arts’ college in a more rural location?).

At first, the process of selecting an institution can seem overwhelming. While the internet can be useful, it is also easy to get swamped by the information that is available. However, there are a number of websites that can help to simplify the selection process. The following websites offer search engines that can help you narrow your search and order your thoughts by producing a list of universities that match your needs and interests - www.petersons.com and www.collegeboard.com and www.collegeview.com.

Is it expensive to study in the US?

Yes, it can be. However, a wide range of tuition fees and living costs, plus some financial aid from colleges, make study in the United States affordable for hundreds of thousands of international students each year. Tuition costs alone (not including living expenses) can range from US\$2,000 per year at some community colleges right through to over US\$40,000 for prestigious private universities. Recent data indicates that 74% of international students fund their own studies, however, many universities have some funding available for international students. When you request an application pack you should also request a financial aid pack. When filling in your applications, please be aware that financial aid deadlines are often earlier than admission deadlines.

Are international students eligible for sports scholarships?

Yes. A number of US universities offer full or partial scholarships for talented athletes. You will have to register with the National Collegiate Athletics Association’s (NCAA) Eligibility Center before you may receive a scholarship. The NCAA website www.ncaa.org provides a link to the Eligibility Center, lists those schools that specialize in particular sports and will take you through the process of how to apply for an athletic scholarship in the US.

How many universities should I apply to?

It is expensive to apply to US universities; some universities charge up to US\$200.00 per application (though some institutions waive their application fee in cases of financial need). It is best to apply to about five universities (or 'schools'): (two 'dream' or 'reach' schools, two '50/50' schools and a 'safety' or 'back-up' school). This does not mean that your safety school is a bad school. It simply means that admission is not as competitive as it is for other very popular and competitive institutions.

Will I have to sit a test for admission?

You will most likely have to sit one or more of the following examinations as part of the application process. Check the admission requirements of each university you are planning to apply to in order to see which test(s) is required/preferred.

SAT Reasoning Test: This examination is usually sat by Year 13 students for entry into a US university. The SAT measures the critical reading, writing and mathematical abilities you'll need for academic success in the US.

SAT Subject Tests: Some universities may require you to take one or more SAT subject tests, in addition to the SAT Reasoning Test. The subject tests are a series of one-hour multiple choice tests in a variety of subjects.

ACT: This examination is often considered as an alternative to SAT. The ACT examination is generally preferred by students with a technical background, as it contains a science section in addition to critical reading, writing and mathematics .

TOEFL: Students whose first language is not English must also take the TOEFL examination as part of the application process. (This requirement is often waived when a student has studied for a number of years in an academic system where the language of instruction is English).

Further information about these tests is listed on the Educational Services page of Fulbright New Zealand's website.

When should I apply to a US university?

You should begin the process early. Ideally, students should begin researching institutions a good 12-18 months before they want to study in the US. The following is a good basic timeline to follow:

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|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| April-June | Research and request information from universities |
| July-August | Register for standardised tests |
| September -December | Complete applications for financial aid and for admission |
| March-May | Admissions decisions mailed out by universities |
| June-August | Obtain a student visa |
| August-September | US academic year begins |

Where can I get more information?

For more information on all of the above, please visit the Educational Services and Study in the US sections of Fulbright New Zealand's website – **www.fulbright.org.nz** – or contact one of the *educationUSA* advisers:

Wellington - Kara Wood, (04) 494 1504, educate@fulbright.org.nz

Auckland – Christy Wall, (09) 303 2724, aucklandeducation@state.gov